

Calendar No. 369

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION**S. 2351****[Report No. 119–117]**

To supplement existing lease authorities available to the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to support research, education, and training, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 17, 2025

Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. PADILLA, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. WICKER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

APRIL 13, 2026

Reported by Mr. CRUZ, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

A BILL

To supplement existing lease authorities available to the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to support research, education, and training, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Space Exploration Re-
3 search Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRA-**
5 **TION SUPPLEMENTAL LEASE AUTHORITY.**

6 (a) SUPPLEMENTAL LEASE AUTHORITY.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
8 National Aeronautics and Space Administration (re-
9 ferred to in this Act as the “Administrator”) may,
10 using existing lease authorities available to the Ad-
11 ministrator and on such terms as the Administrator
12 considers appropriate, lease, for a term not to exceed
13 99 years, real property under the jurisdiction of the
14 Administrator to 1 or more entities described in sub-
15 section (c) for the purpose of the construction and
16 operation on such real property of 1 or more facili-
17 ties the purposes of which shall be—

18 (A) to conduct aeronautical and space re-
19 search;

20 (B) to educate and train individuals for ca-
21 reers in the space industry;

22 (C) to carry out the transfer of aero-
23 nautical and space technology between the
24 United States public and domestic private sec-
25 tors;

1 ~~(D)~~ to conduct scientific, engineering, med-
 2 ical, or academic activities; and

3 ~~(E)~~ to conduct any other space-related ac-
 4 tivity.

5 ~~(2)~~ RENEWAL.—The Administrator may renew
 6 a lease under this subsection for 1 or more addi-
 7 tional periods.

8 ~~(b)~~ ADMINISTRATIVE, MAINTENANCE, AND INSTRU-
 9 TIONAL SUPPORT.—Subject to the availability of appro-
 10 priations, the Administrator may—

11 ~~(1)~~ enter into 1 or more agreements, on such
 12 terms as the Administrator considers appropriate,
 13 with 1 or more entities described in subsection (c)
 14 to lease back real property described in subsection
 15 (a); including such real property that has been—

16 ~~(A)~~ leased to a private entity under other
 17 lease authority available to the Administrator;
 18 and

19 ~~(B)~~ subleased to an entity described in
 20 subsection (c);

21 ~~(2)~~ enter into 1 or more contracts, grant agree-
 22 ments, cooperative agreements, or other authorized
 23 transactions with an entity described in subsection
 24 (c) with respect to such property; and

1 ~~(3)~~ provide administrative, maintenance, in-
 2 structional, and other appropriate support, with or
 3 without reimbursement, to the ~~1~~ or more facilities
 4 described in subsection (a).

5 ~~(c)~~ ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—An entity described in
 6 this subsection is—

7 ~~(1)~~ the State in which the real property de-
 8 scribed in subsection (a) is located;

9 ~~(2)~~ a subdivision, agent, or agency of such a
 10 State;

11 ~~(3)~~ a corporation or foundation organized exclu-
 12 sively for education or scientific purposes that is ex-
 13 empt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the
 14 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (~~26 U.S.C.~~
 15 501(c)(3)); and

16 ~~(4)~~ an institution of higher education (as de-
 17 fined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of
 18 1965 (~~20 U.S.C. 1001~~)).

19 ~~(d)~~ DELEGATION.—The Administrator may delegate
 20 the authorities under subsections (a) and (b) to subordi-
 21 nate officers and employees of the National Aeronautics
 22 and Space Administration, as the Administrator considers
 23 appropriate.

24 ~~(e)~~ EFFECT OF OTHER LAW.—The authority pro-
 25 vided by this section shall apply—

1 (1) regardless of the existing authority used by
2 the Administrator to lease the real property de-
3 scribed in subsection (a); and

4 (2) notwithstanding any provision of—

5 (A) section 1302 of title 40, United States
6 Code;

7 (B) section 20145 of title 51, United
8 States Code; or

9 (C) section 306121 of title 54, United
10 States Code.

11 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

12 *This Act may be cited as the “Space Exploration Re-*
13 *search Act”.*

14 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRA-**
15 **TION SUPPLEMENTAL LEASE AUTHORITY.**

16 (a) *SUPPLEMENTAL LEASE AUTHORITY.*—

17 (1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Administrator of the Na-*
18 *tional Aeronautics and Space Administration (re-*
19 *ferred to in this Act as the “Administrator”) may,*
20 *using existing lease authorities available to the Ad-*
21 *ministrator and on such terms as the Administrator*
22 *considers appropriate to protect the interests of the*
23 *United States, lease, for a term not to exceed 50*
24 *years, real property under the jurisdiction of the Ad-*
25 *ministrator to 1 or more entities described in sub-*

section (c) for the purpose of the construction and operation on such real property of 1 or more facilities the purposes of which shall be—

(A) to conduct aeronautical and space research;

(B) to educate and train individuals for careers in the space industry;

(C) to carry out the transfer of aeronautical and space technology between the United States public and domestic private sectors;

(D) to conduct space-related and aeronautics-related scientific, engineering, medical, or academic activities; and

(E) to conduct any other space-related activity relevant to the mission of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(2) *RENEWAL*.—The Administrator may renew a lease under this subsection for 1 or more additional periods.

(b) *ADMINISTRATIVE, MAINTENANCE, AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT*.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Administrator may—

(1) enter into 1 or more agreements, on such terms as the Administrator considers appropriate, with 1 or more entities described in subsection (c) to

1 *lease back real property described in subsection (a),*
 2 *including such real property that has been subleased*
 3 *to a third party by an entity described in subsection*
 4 *(c);*

5 *(2) enter into 1 or more contracts, grant agree-*
 6 *ments, cooperative agreements, or other authorized*
 7 *transactions with an entity described in subsection (c)*
 8 *with respect to such property; and*

9 *(3) provide administrative, instructional, and*
 10 *other appropriate support, with or without reimburse-*
 11 *ment, to the 1 or more entities described in subsection*
 12 *(c) that are a party to such a contract, agreement, or*
 13 *transaction.*

14 *(c) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—An entity described in*
 15 *this subsection is—*

16 *(1) the State in which the real property de-*
 17 *scribed in subsection (a) is located;*

18 *(2) a subdivision, agent, or agency of such a*
 19 *State;*

20 *(3) a corporation or foundation organized exclu-*
 21 *sively for education or scientific purposes that is ex-*
 22 *empt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the In-*
 23 *ternal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3));*
 24 *and*

1 (4) *an institution of higher education (as defined*
 2 *in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965*
 3 *(20 U.S.C. 1001)).*

4 (d) *DELEGATION.*—*The Administrator may delegate*
 5 *the authorities under subsections (a) and (b) to subordinate*
 6 *officers and employees of the National Aeronautics and*
 7 *Space Administration, as the Administrator considers ap-*
 8 *propriate.*

9 (e) *EFFECT OF OTHER LAW.*—*The authority provided*
 10 *by this section shall apply—*

11 (1) *regardless of the existing authority used by*
 12 *the Administrator to lease the real property described*
 13 *in subsection (a) to entities described in subsection*
 14 *(c); and*

15 (2) *notwithstanding—*

16 (A) *section 1302 of title 40, United States*
 17 *Code;*

18 (B) *subsection (b)(1) and (e)(1) of section*
 19 *20145 of title 51, United States Code; or*

20 (C) *section 306121 of title 54, United States*
 21 *Code.*

22 (f) *ANNUAL REPORT.*—*Not later than January 31 each*
 23 *year, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on*
 24 *Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and*
 25 *the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the*

1 *House of Representatives a report that includes the fol-*
2 *lowing:*

3 (1) *MISSION RELEVANCE.*—*Information that ex-*
4 *plains the importance of each lease and leaseback*
5 *agreement to the accomplishment of 1 or more mis-*
6 *sion requirements of the National Aeronautics and*
7 *Space Administration.*

8 (2) *VALUE OF ARRANGEMENTS AND EXPENDI-*
9 *TURES OF REVENUES.*—*Information that identifies*
10 *and quantifies the value of the arrangements and ex-*
11 *penditures of revenues received under this section.*

12 (3) *AVAILABILITY AND USE OF FUNDS FOR OPER-*
13 *ATING PLAN.*—*The availability and use of funds re-*
14 *ceived under this section for the Administration's op-*
15 *erating plan.*

16 (4) *ANNUAL AND CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF*
17 *LEASES.*—*The annual and cumulative number of*
18 *leases entered into under this section, by National*
19 *Aeronautics and Space Administration center and fa-*
20 *cility.*

21 (5) *ESTIMATED COST SAVINGS.*—*For each active*
22 *lease agreement under this section, the estimated cost*
23 *savings to the National Aeronautics and Space Ad-*
24 *ministration resulting from reduced maintenance, op-*

1 *erating, and associated costs in the previous fiscal*
2 *year.*

3 (6) *OTHER QUANTIFIABLE BENEFITS.—Other*
4 *quantifiable benefits, including additional cost sav-*
5 *ings not included under paragraph (4), to the Na-*
6 *tional Aeronautics and Space Administration result-*
7 *ing from the use of leases under this section.*

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